



PROPOSED

Imperial Consolidation ACT

BY A MEMBER
Of the
IMPERIAL UNITY LEAGUE
Of
OTTAWA.

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IMPERIAL CONSOLIDATION ACT.

An act for the re-organisation of the House of Lords, and to provide representation therein for all British possessions.

WHEREAS the possessions of Her Majesty in various parts of the world abroad have in these late years greatly increased in population, wealth, and importance, and continue to increase not only by their natural and internal progress, and by the transfer to them of population from foreign countries, but also by the emigration and resort thereto and the settlement therein of great numbers of Her Majesty's subjects of Great Britain and Ireland.

And whereas, to the end that the feeling of loyalty to her Majesty's throne and person, and of attachment to the Mother Country and the free Government thereof, which have ever been displayed by the inhabitants of the colonies and dependencies may be maintained and fostered, it is right and expedient that they should be enabled to participate in the legislative government of the Empire by their representatives in the Imperial Parliament, and so consolidate in a closer political union Her Majesty's subjects in all parts of her dominions ;

And whereas it is of ancient usage and right that no tax or tollage should be imposed on Her Majesty's subjects, except on their consent thereto by their representatives in Parliament, but that they should of their free will and pleasure give and grant to Her Majesty supplies for the maintenance of her Royal dignity and government, and for the defence of her Dominions by land and sea ;

And whereas the Imperial Parliament has ever had, has and of right ought to have, full and supreme power and authority to make laws binding upon Her Majesty's subjects in all parts of her dominions in all matters touching the general weal of the Empire, and the maintenance and defence of the same, and it is right and expedient that representatives of all British possessions should have seats in the House of Lords, and that the Constitution of the Imperial Parliament should be amended for such purpose in the manner in this act provided :

Be it therefore enacted, &c.,

1. The short title of this act is " The Imperial Consolidation Act."

2. This Act shall come into operation so far as regards the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland on day of , 19 , and a copy shall immediately, on the passing thereof, be sent to the Governor of each British colony or dependency, who shall cause it to be published therein, but this act shall not take effect in any of said colonies or dependencies until after it has been approved and adopted by its Parliament, or Government, nor until steps have been taken by the said Government, in accordance with the provisions of this act, to send delegates to represent it in the House of Lords.

PART I.

Of the House of Lords, or Great Council of the Empire.

3. The House of Lords shall consist of the Lords spiritual at present possessing seats therein, and of the Lords of Parliament, Imperial Councillors, and Imperial Delegates elected, appointed, or deputed, as by this Act provided.

4. The peers of the United Kingdom shall elect three hundred of their number, and the peers so elected shall be Lords of Parliament for life. The number of such representative Lords of Parliament, to be elected by the peers of England, Ireland and Scotland respectively, shall be determined by and be in proportion to the relative population of these countries.

5. Such elections shall be conducted in the same manner as that heretofore in force for the election of the representative peers in Ireland.

6. It shall be lawful for Her Majesty, from time to time, by her royal letters patent, to appoint such persons as she thinks fit to be Imperial Councillors for life, to represent India, the crown dependencies, and the self-governing colonies in the House of Lords, so soon as said countries have expressed their approval of this act, their willingness to be taxed for Imperial purposes, and have taken the necessary steps, by this Act provided, for sending delegates from their respective Parliaments or Governments to the House of Lords, but so that not more than fifty persons so appointed for life shall have seats therein at any one time. Such councillors shall hold their seats on the same conditions as the other Lords of Parliament, and shall, while holding such seats, rank as barons in the order of their patents.

7. Upon any vacancy of the seat of an elected Lord by death or resignation, a fresh election shall be held by the peers of that country of the United Kingdom in whose representation the vacancy has occurred. If such vacancy should take place in the representation of any of the other divisions of the Empire than the United Kingdom, a fresh appointment shall be made by Her Majesty.

8. The sons of the Queen being of full age, and every peer holding or having held the office of Lord High Chancellor of the Empire, and every Lord of Parliament holding or having held office as one of Her Majesty's Imperial Ministers, shall be a Lord of Parliament, and shall hold his seat for life unless he resigns the same.

9. Nothing herein contained shall be deemed to affect in any manner the royal prerogative to create privileges or titles of rank and honor.

10. After each general election in the United Kingdom of members of the House of Commons, the said House shall select eighty of their number to be members of the House of Lords. The persons so selected shall be called Imperial delegates, and shall hold their seats during the term of the existence of the Parliament selecting them.

11. It shall form part of the business and duties of the House of Lords to take diligent care of, and provide for, the expenses of Her Majesty's throne and court, of the naval defence of the Empire, its fortresses and coaling stations, of the War office, of the diplomatic and consular services, of the Foreign and Colonial Offices, of the various means of Imperial inter-communication, and of all other departments and undertakings generally useful to the whole Empire.

12. It shall be lawful for the House of Lords to levy duties of a uniform rate and character on all foreign importations into any part of the Empire, over and above the local tariff in force there, to such an extent as will defray the Imperial expenditures for the purposes mentioned in the 11th clause of this Act. Such uniform Imperial import duties shall, however, not be levied in any one of Her Majesty's colonies and dependencies until it has obtained representation in the House of Lords in the manner hereinafter provided. It shall also be lawful for the House of Lords to raise revenue for Imperial purposes in any other manner which may seem to it to be expedient.

13. Until such time as a colony or dependency obtains representation in the House of Lords, and the Imperial import duties are collected at its ports of entry, the Imperial duties in question shall be levied on the goods which said colony may send to the ports of the United Kingdom, or of any British possession which has obtained Imperial representation.

14. In general, the House of Lords shall have cognisance of and authority regarding all matters which affect the Empire as a whole, and shall not revise the legislation of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom, or of any other of the local Parliaments of the Empire, except in the case of such of their enactments as have been reserved for Her Majesty's consideration, or have been disallowed by her authority.

PART II

Of the Imperial Ministry.

15. It shall be lawful for Her Majesty to select, from among the members of the House of Lords, one of their number whom she may deem to possess the confidence of the said House, and to be most capable of forming a Ministry for the Administration of Imperial affairs, to act as Imperial Prime Minister.

16. The Imperial Prime Minister shall select, from among the members of the House of Lords, such persons as appear to him to be best qualified for carrying on the administration of Imperial affairs, and place one of them in charge of each of the following departments: The War Office, the Admiralty, the Foreign Office, the Colonial Office, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, etc.

17. The departments, or offices, heretofore presided over by the Secretary of State for War, the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Secretary of State for India, the Lord Chancellor, etc., shall hereafter be regarded as Imperial departments, and separated from those charged with the administration of the affairs of the United Kingdom.

18. Besides the departments, enumerated in clauses 16 and 17 of this act, it shall be

lawful to establish another for the collection and care of the Imperial Revenue, and the disbursement of Imperial expenditures, which shall be known as the Treasury of the Empire, and which shall be presided over by an Imperial Treasurer. The accounts of this Department shall be kept entirely distinct from those of Her Majesty's Exchequer for the United Kingdom.

19. The Department of the Secretary of State for War, besides having control of the navy and the Imperial fortresses and coaling stations, in times both of peace and war, shall, on the outbreak of the latter, also have authority over the military forces of the United Kingdom, and of the colonies and dependencies, in order the better to provide for the united and efficient defence of the whole Empire, and the prosecution of any wars in which Her Majesty's forces may be engaged.

20. The members of the Imperial Ministry shall only hold office so long as it possesses the confidence of the House of Lords. Should the latter, by an adverse vote, show its distrust, the Imperial Prime Minister shall place the resignation of himself and his colleagues in the hands of Her Majesty, who shall, as early as may be convenient, appoint another Prime Minister to undertake the formation of a New Imperial Ministry.

PART III.

Of the House of Commons of Great Britain and Ireland.

21. With the exception of the departments of state specified in clause 17 of this act, the House of Commons shall continue to control all the business heretofore placed before it, and more especially the affairs of the United Kingdom. Its legislation and decisions shall go into effect without concurrence by the House of Lords, and shall not be subject to revision by it, unless in the event of disallowance by Her Majesty, acting under the advice of Her Imperial Ministers.

22. With the exception of the departments named in clauses 16 and 17 of this act, all the departments of Government now in existence for the administration of the affairs of the United Kingdom shall continue to be presided over and controlled by the same Ministers or officials as at present, and they shall be regarded as Her Majesty's ministers for the United Kingdom and as forming the Cabinet.

23. It shall be lawful for the House of Commons of the United Kingdom, whenever it regards such change as advantageous for the common weal, to grant separate legislatures to Ireland and Scotland, and endow them with such powers as may be deemed necessary for the management of their local affairs, provided always that authority is also conferred on these local legislatures to send delegates to the House of Lords, in which event the number of 80 delegates shall be elected by the three different legislatures in proportion to the relative populations of England, Scotland, and Ireland.

PART IV.

Of the relations of the Governments of the Colonies and Dependencies to the House of Lords.

24. Should the Parliament or Government of any of Her Majesty's colonies or possessions approve of the terms of this Act, it shall be lawful for the authorities there established to inform Her Majesty's Imperial Government of the fact, and to make application for representation in the House of Lords or Great Council of the Empire.

25. In the event of such application, it shall be lawful for the Imperial Government, in conjunction with the Government making the application, to arrange provisionally the details of the terms of admission to representation, and more especially to determine the highest limits of the rates of the local tariff of the country in question, beyond which it shall not be lawful for the said country to impose higher rates of duty.

26. It shall be the duty of the Imperial Government and of the various Governments in the different parts of the Empire to reduce the local rates of duty as much as possible, consistent with the financial requirements of each of the various parts of the Empire, so as to approach as nearly as practicable to a system of free trade within the Empire.

27. So soon as the negotiations between the Imperial Government and the Government making the application for representation are completed, and the details arranged, it shall be lawful for the Imperial Government to communicate these to the General Council of the Empire, and if approved, to take steps for the appointment of Imperial Councillors to represent the applying colony or dependency, in consonance with the terms of this act.

28. It shall be the duty of the Governments of the various dominions, colonies, and dependencies of the Empire which have obtained Imperial representation, to cause the officials in their custom houses at the various ports of entry within their several territories to collect, in addition to the duties levied under the local tariff, the duties imposed by the Imperial Council, and to remit the same to the Imperial Treasury, without any deduction whatever.

29. As soon as any one of the groups of Colonies known as the Dominion of Canada, of Australia, of New Zealand, or of South Africa, has obtained representation in the House of Lords, it shall be lawful, after each general election of members to its House of Commons, for said House to appoint a delegation to the House of Lords, to hold seats there as Imperial delegates during the existence of the Parliament appointing them. The number of members in each delegation shall be according to the taxation for Imperial purposes of the dominion they represent, and shall bear the same proportion to it as the number of delegates from the House of Commons of the United Kingdom (eighty) bears to its taxation for Imperial purposes.

30. It shall be lawful for Her Majesty's Representative in India, and the Governors in the various Crown dependencies, to appoint from among the members of the Councils or Legislatures in each dependency such a number of Imperial delegates as corresponds to its taxation for Imperial purposes, in the same proportion as mentioned in the preceding clause. Such delegates shall hold their seats only during the term of office of the Governor appointing them.

N.B.—The composition of the reorganised House of Lords or General Council of the Empire, according to the foregoing Bill, would be about as follows :—

LIFE MEMBERS :	
English Peers.....	220
Scotch Peers.....	34
Irish Peers.....	46
	— 300
ROYAL AND EX-OFFICIO COUNCILLORS.....	10
IMPERIAL COUNCILLORS, from—	
India.....	26
Canada.....	13
Australasia.....	7
British Africa.....	1
West Indies.....	3
	— 50
LORDS SPIRITUAL.....	26
IMPERIAL DELEGATES, holding seats during the existence of the Parliaments or authorities appointing them, from—	
United Kingdom.....	80
India.....	9
Canada.....	6
Australasia.....	3
West Indies.....	1
British Africa.....	1
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Total.....	486

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